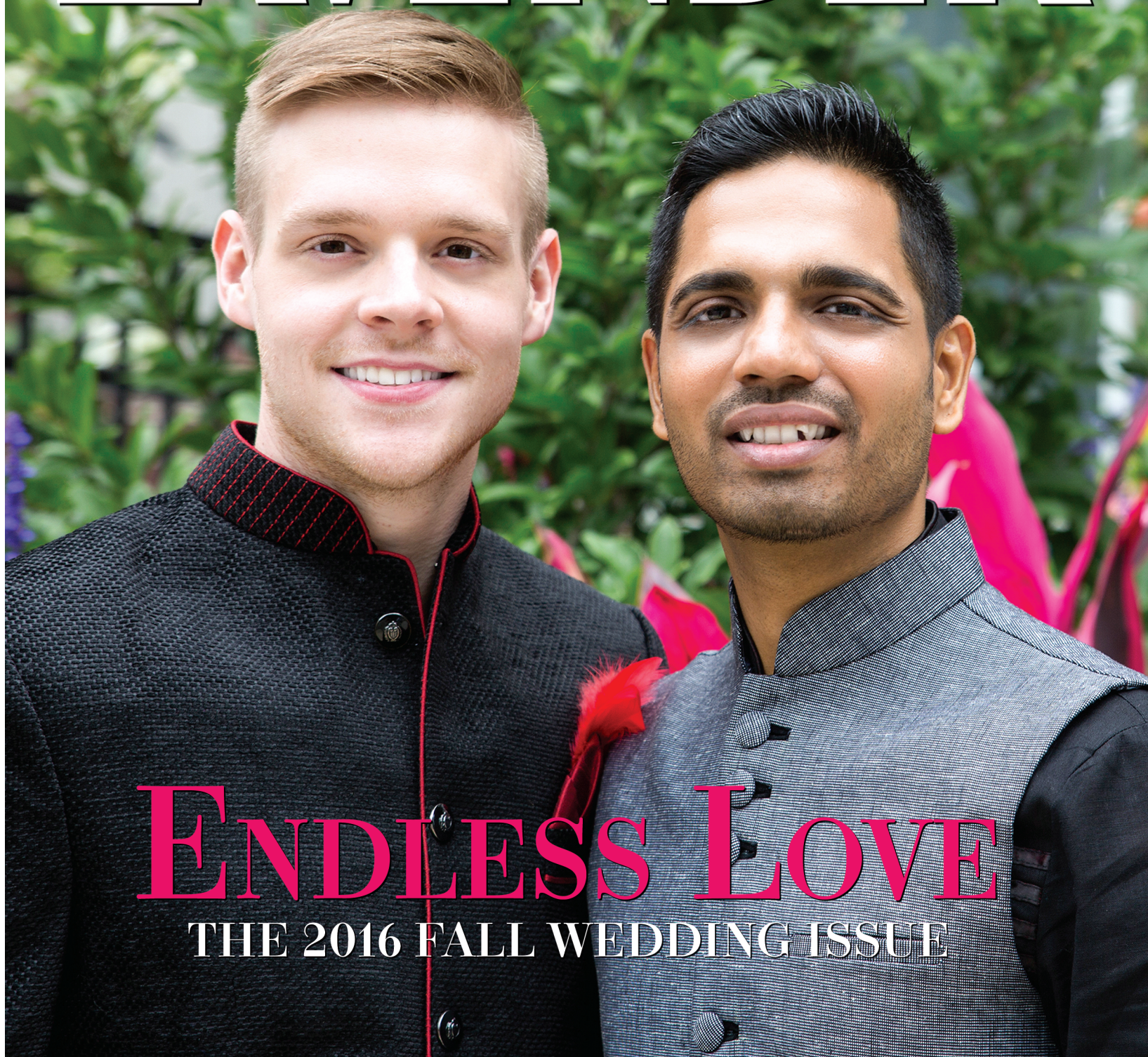


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THE 2016 FALL WEDDING ISSUE

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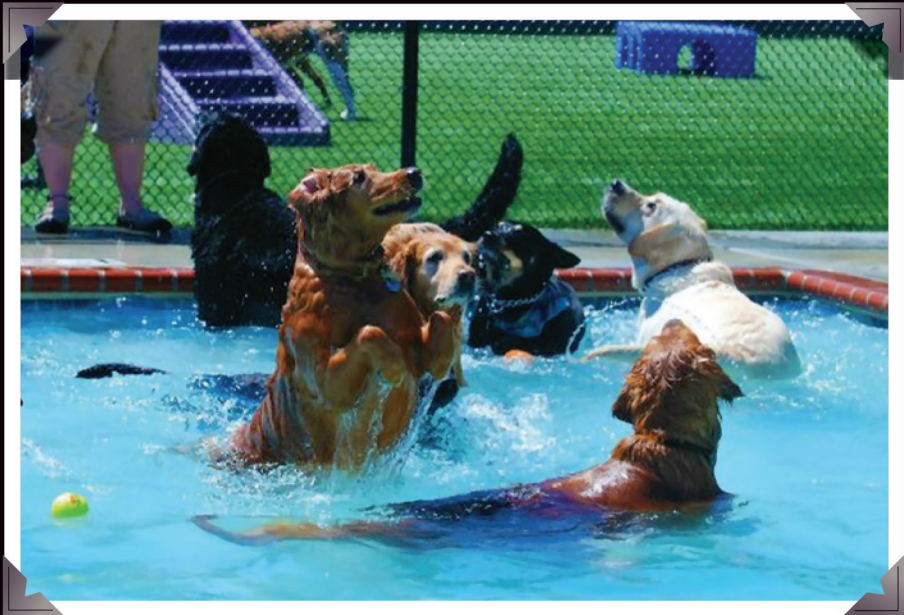


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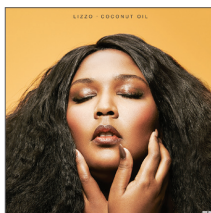
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ON THE COVER

We're celebrating the endless love of the fall wedding season. Pictured here, Jake and Swapnil.
Photo by Carla Crandall, Creative Image Photography



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Lavender Media, Inc.

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ENDLESS LOVE

I went to a wedding a couple weekends ago. It was an idyllic cusp-of-fall day at Mayowood Stone Barn in Rochester. The whole afternoon and evening seemed like it granted the couple an extra-long golden hour, when the sun hits everything just right. The choices of songs and readings struck my fancy perfectly with a nice mix of current affairs, social commentary, romance, and spirituality, while there was plenty of fun to be had with a taco bar, a mish-mash of colorful cake selections, and a retro VW Blue Bus Photo Booth parked outside the barn that used to belong to the Mayo family of Mayo Clinic fame. What struck me that afternoon is that the wedding was perfect for my preferences as a 39-year-old in 2016. The rituals were present, the event pulled in the traditional and the trendy, the readings resonated with my more mature mind and heart, and it was obvious that the couple was celebrating the fact that they had, as they put it in their vows, found their “person” in each other. There was a timelessness to the affair and an endlessness to the love.

When I was younger, it seemed that a wedding would be the beginning of a to-do list: house, pet, kids, retirement, death. As I’m getting older, my checklist might be down to just one thing: someone to hang out with for the rest of my life. A beloved who doesn’t have to do or be anything but mine. Less of a checklist love, more of a steadfast love.

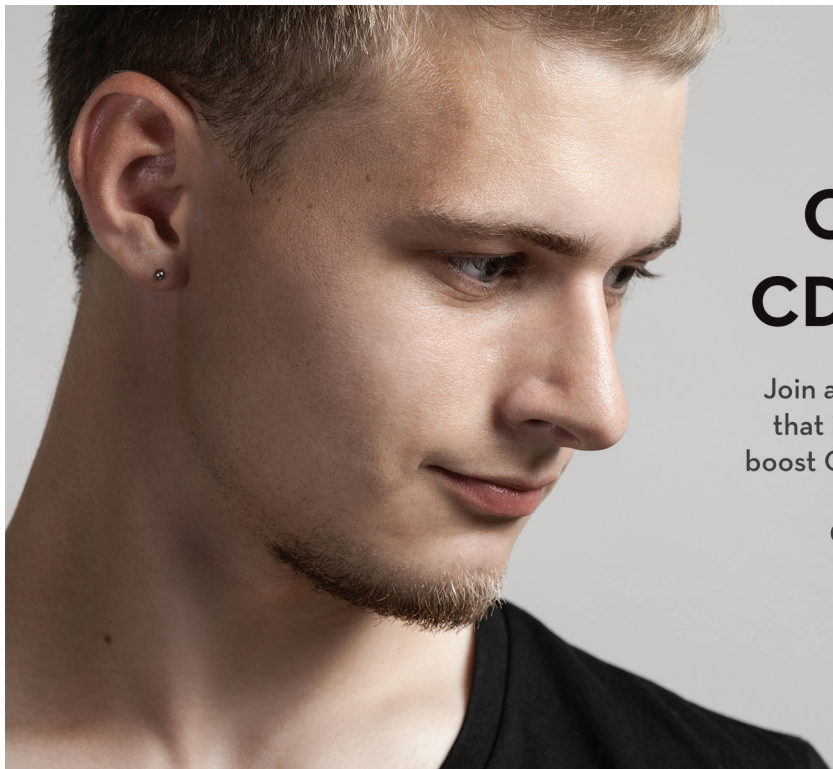
And if a wedding that makes that bond official can somehow capture the endlessness of our love today, tomorrow, and forever with golden-hour aplomb, I’ll consider myself and my beloved to be particularly fortunate.

This wedding issue has a mish-mash of traditional and trendy. I’m thrilled to present a large section of Real Weddings, because seeing people in this community commit themselves to each other is something of which I’ll never tire. You celebrating your love in your own ways with your people is what makes each of these wedding issues a public record of sorts; evidence of both what makes this community unique as well as an archive of how you did it for those who follow your steps. Also in this issue, we talk about new practices in throwing more casual events, we show off new trends with the most delectable and decor-oriented cookies, and we talk to two couples who married each other after taking their time, whether due to life’s circumstances or legalities or a mixture of all sorts of things. But, their love waited. And their bonds will last. And their love will be endless.

While weddings and events change with time and trend, we’ll always have endless love as the goal, the hope, the ever-after.

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Andy ■



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BY RACHELLE MAZUMDAR, OWNER OF STYLE-ARCHITECTS WEDDINGS + EVENTS
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Everyone dreams of their wedding being an amazing party for their family and friends, but how they achieve this can vary drastically. As a wedding planner, I hear directly from guests how delighted they are when couples change things up and I'm definitely seeing a shift. Many

couples are opting to avoid the formality and tradition of sit-down ceremonies and dinners and are choosing instead to host ceremonies in the round and free-flowing receptions instead.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ➔



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{ TRENDS }



CEREMONIES IN THE ROUND

Ceremonies are getting shorter and shorter with few (if any) readings, little music, and a singular focus on sharing the story of the couple and reciting heartfelt vows. Because of shorter ceremonies, many couples are opting to host their ceremonies as stand-up ceremonies in the round. Not only is this setup more intimate and removes the awkwardness (for some) of being the center of attention during a processional and recessional, but it helps the budget, too! You don't have to rent, setup, and tear down ceremony chairs and it allows you to immediately transition the space from ceremony to cocktails without having to rearrange the room. Hosting your ceremony on the dance floor, if you have one, and using the same room for your reception increases venue options and decreases room rental costs (savings which you can potentially apply elsewhere). There are so many additional and unique spaces to consider when you only need one room instead of two.

But with these informal ceremonies, what do guests do when they

arrive and how do you transition to the ceremony and then to the reception? That is where free-flowing receptions come into play.

FREE-FLOWING RECEPTION

What is it?

Free-flowing receptions skip the formality and rigidity of a sit-down dinner and enable guests to move about and mingle throughout the entire night. Whereas sit-down dinners require two hours for dinner service, larger venues and a table, chair, linens and centerpiece for every guest, free-flowing receptions allow you to work within smaller spaces and perhaps put some of that saved money toward non-traditional seating options such as lounge groupings and low cocktail tables, creating a more intimate, comfortable, and relaxed environment for your guests.

What does it look like?

Start the party off right away and host a cocktail reception prior to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ➔

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{ TRENDS }

ceremony. Offer passed hors d'oeuvres to take the edge off any hunger. This works especially well if your ceremony is on a Friday and guests are either fighting traffic to get there on time or just want that drink to unwind after a long work week. It's a pleasant surprise for guests and cues them to the fact that this wedding is going to be unlike any other!

Roughly 45 to 60 minutes in, have your officiant instruct guests to gather in a circle around you for the ceremony. Keep the ceremony to no longer than 15 minutes. Following the kiss, consider having servers pass champagne to your guests for an impromptu toast. Welcome your guests and fill them in on the evening's activities.

Move into more passed appetizers and open food stations. Offering both alleviates the rush toward the food stations and keeps the mingling and flow of guests through the space comfortable. Keep the surprises coming throughout the evening to keep guests engaged and entertained.

What are the keys to success?

Having planned this style of reception many times, let me share with you the keys to success.

1. Make sure you have seating for roughly 75 percent of your guests. This can take the form of dinner tables, lounge groupings, stools at high-tops and low cocktail tables. Though you may likely want to consolidate the dining tables, the remaining seating should be scattered throughout the space. If you are going to do lounge groupings, I always suggest at least two groupings so it doesn't look like an afterthought.

2. Spread out the food stations so guests are not concentrated in areas but are rather utilizing the entire space throughout the event.

3. Place the dance floor in the center of the room. This is where




CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 ➔



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the energy is and having it in the center ensures no corner of the room gets too sleepy.

4. Plan for transitions throughout the night. Whereas sit-down dinners have a cadence to them that people expect (ceremony followed by one-hour cocktail reception, two-hour dinner, and three hours of dancing), free-form receptions are a new format to most people. After about 90 minutes, guests are going to wonder what's next to keep their interest and energy flowing. Therefore, plan to transition your event every 90 minutes or so. Here are a few ideas:

Food: Transition from food stations to a dessert station to a late night snack station.

Music: Transition styles of music from cocktail music to more upbeat tempos suitable for dancing. Or, transition from DJ/iPod cocktail music to a band or vice versa.

Activities: Open up alternative activities throughout the night such as a whiskey station, a photo booth, games, or pool tables and darts (which can easily be rented).

5. Communicate with guests so they know what to expect. Create signage near the entrance to the event which outlines the flow of the evening. It sets the tone for the evening and lets guests know what to expect.

To do it right, this reception format requires proper forethought and planning, but we are always happy to work with you to create your unique wedding. Your guests will be thrilled that you made the effort to give them a new and memorable experience. ■

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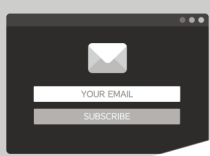
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THE COOKIE CREATIVE

MANIPULATING ICING

BY SHANE LUECK | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CORI ROBINSON

Everyone has a memory related to cookies. Whether it's dunking Oreos in milk when you were little or watching your grandma make Christmas cookies, somewhere in your memory is an event involving cookies.

Holly Nolan's dad was a cartoonist and her mom was constantly baking cookies and cakes. "Getting into cake decorating really married the skills and passions I learned from my parents," she reflects.

Nolan had been decorating Christmas cookies since she was a kid, but

it wasn't until she started doing cookies and cupcakes for her daughters' birthdays that she began getting requests for orders. When she started her own company (Pipeline Cookie Company) in Hawaii in 2009, she says, "I decided to only offer cookies because it was what I enjoyed most."

Cori Robinson has been in love with cake and cookie decorating since she was a little girl. "It's the funniest thing — Holly and I share the very same story of going to McGlynn's Bakery as kids and watching



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{ TRENDS }

the cake decorators work through the bakery front glass while our moms would shop,” she remembers. “I could have stood there for hours; I found the process so hypnotic. At that time, I knew that manipulating icing in that way was something I wanted to learn.”

Decorating cookies as gifts for friends and family for years, Robinson dreamed of how to turn it into a business one day. “I really hadn’t seen many options for royal icing cookies in the Twin Cities so I thought the idea had potential,” she says. “When I moved to the A-Mill Artist Lofts, I found myself in such a supportive creative community and it was actually one of our first events as a community, specifically the Maker’s Market held last December that inspired me to take the leap and officially start The Cookie Creative.”

For Robinson and Nolan, the story could have been one of great rivalry, but when they met on Instagram they decided to make it a story of partnership. As their website says, Robinson had just started The Cookie Creative, and Holly’s business needed re-branding after relocating from Hawaii. They both needed help to grow. Nolan reached out to Robinson, they met (and hit it off instantly), and were soon married — their businesses, that is. The Cookie Creative officially became a duo in July 2016.

Having met through Instagram and having a pretty big following on the social media site, the duo agrees that Instagram has played a pretty big role in their business. Robinson divulges, “I’m probably Instagram’s biggest fan; in the beginning, it was the only marketing platform I used for The Cookie Creative and it’s amazing how it’s helped our business grow. I would say that at least 85 percent of our customers have found us because of the app. There’s really a community there that’s connected us to so many wonderful people and fellow creatives around the Twin Cities and beyond. I still get sort of awe struck when I think about it; I’m truly grateful.”

Nolan agrees, adding, “My Instagram presence was pretty new when I found Cori. I had never felt a fear of the ‘competition’ before I saw her work and instantly wanted to get to know her. Even with my relatively



new Instagram account I was surprised at how many local people were finding me through not just my own posts, but customers sharing their custom orders and tagging me/us.”

Citing a fantastic and supportive creative community on the social networking site, Nolan says, “There are definitely posts that garner more attention than others (baby themes, for some reason, are always a huge hit). I think that our work stands out from others because we aim for big impact with simple effort.”

Hand-rolled, buttery and delicious, these cookies are baked in small batches and completely made from scratch. Each cookie is then hand-decorated and topped with a sweet layer of royal icing. There is a quality to hand-piped cookies that you’re just never going to find from anything mass-produced. Creating custom orders, something custom tailored for each client, really makes each order unique and personal.

“I have this obsession with quality and it’s important to me that every cookie we decorate is eye-catching and beautiful,” Robinson says. “When Holly and I decorate together, we throw on some music or just talk to one another, like really have a conversation, something real. I find that in working in that environment, it’s easy to achieve this level of flow with the decorating that really yields a quality product. The entire process is about an experience and I think that’s what makes our products stand out.”

But other than being pretty, the cookies have to stand up to the taste test, which is why they only use the best ingredients. “People often tell us that they’re ‘too pretty to eat’ but, really, please eat them!” Nolan laughs. “Real butter and vanilla and the rich yolks from free-range eggs really do create a more flavorful cookie.”

The Cookie Creative only uses butter from cows not treated with rBHT and eggs from free-range chickens. These women like to keep the ingredients simple: butter, eggs, flour, and sugar in the perfect ratios for the perfect melt-in-your-mouth cookie.

“In my opinion, when animals are raised humanely, they give us this beautiful gift of not only increased nutrition

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 ➔

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but also a richness of flavor that isn't found in butter and eggs sourced from conventional farming practices," Robinson says. "It was always important to me to carry that over into The Cookie Creative and it's important to me that our customers can taste the difference in our product."

"Rather than the repetition and monotony of mass-producing a few designs, I really enjoy the process of working with clients to create something custom," Nolan says. The process begins when most customers submit a quote request online with some basic information. While some people know exactly what they're looking for (even bringing in some Pinterest inspiration to replicate), some leave the creativity up to the decorators and just ask for a general theme.

Cookies can be booked with as little as two weeks notice, but for weddings, Nolan says there's really not a time that's too soon to start planning. "Just being Cori and myself, unfortunately there are times that we can't accept orders," she says. "Six to twelve months in advance would definitely secure your order on our calendar."

Wedding creations run the gamut of designs: everything from individually hand-piped royal icing succulents to personalized, monogrammed cookies for favors to simple and elegant hexagon cookies with a gold-splash. "Working with royal icing gives us a lot of flexibility to use a variety of decorating techniques to turn our client's vision into reality," Robinson says.

Looking for something a little extra? What about a cookie decorating workshop that's perfect for a shower or bachelor/ette party? The Cookie Creative is more than happy to share their talents in a workshop setting. "We'll also be offering a holiday decorating workshop in November so you can really hone your decorating skills before December," Robinson says. "Keep an eye on our Instagram for details!" ■

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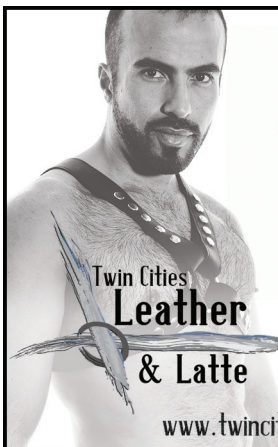

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Celebrating

{ WEDDING STORY }

Adding Some Sparkle: Celebrating

ALISHA & KATA'S WEDDING

BY KATHLEEN BRADBURY | PHOTOGRAPHY BY TROY KIVEL, PIXELPOSEY PHOTOGRAPHY

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Sometimes it's love at first sight. But sometimes love takes its sweet time, simply waiting for the right moment to appear, gradually developing without fanfare or a sudden rush of clarity. For Alisha Linnea Nehring and Kata Garrison, their romance hid in plain sight for years and developed slowly through a mix of magical and difficult moments, proving their love to be a delicate balance of reality and "shiny, sparkly stardust."

Kata and Alisha initially met in the early 2000s when they both were part of the Drag and Debauchery troupe at Lucy's. Though they can't remember an exact initial meeting "due to the debauchery of the time," an introduction occurred at a New Year's Eve party in 2004. But that New Year didn't bring romance for the two, and it wasn't until 2009 when the couple connected again.

After meeting up a few times at gatherings, their mutual friend (and eventual bridesmaid) Mina flew to town and gave Alisha the perfect opportunity to ask Kata for a date. Though Kata later tried to get out of the brunch date, the duo finally had their first date at a cozy restaurant on Selby Avenue in St. Paul in early October of 2009. After eating, they walked around the neighborhood and watched the Twin Cities marathoners race down Summit Avenue.

The couple's first year together was easy and fun, full of laughter and good times. Kata, an artist and bartender extraordinaire, seemed to provide the perfect balance for Alisha, who is an attorney. Alisha fell for Kata's generous smile and large laughter, and she calls Kata "the anchor to my heart and home when I am trying to run off the cliffs of dreams and possibility." Kata's cooking skills also sweetened the deal; "My belly and heart are full!" Alisha exclaims.

Kata was drawn to Alisha's loyal and loving nature.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 ➔



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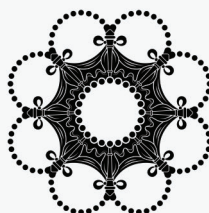
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She adds, “Ask anyone who knows Alisha; you could not ask for a better defender or supporter.” Kata also loves that “the same woman who works within the confines of law and justice also has a policy of ‘shiny sparkly stardust’ and ‘ask the universe’ when the future is uncertain.”

But they were soon faced with several challenges, and had to consider whether it was possible, or even desirable, to navigate those challenges together. As the couple made the conscious decision to work through their challenges, they realized they were both seriously committed to each other: “It was only when we were able to look at each other through tears and frustration and ‘know’ that we would never separate despite the urge to run that we both knew we were in it for good.”

Throughout the years, the couple has grown stronger by supporting each other as individuals. Alisha appreciates that Kata “encourages me to grow and helps me develop my strengths while navigating my faults.” In turn, Kata loves that Alisha fights for her beliefs and doesn’t sugar-coat anything, adding that she needs Alisha’s “balance of honesty and reassurance in my life.” Kata appreciates how Alisha pushes her to expand her boundaries all while loving “the things about me that I think are unimportant and sees me for who I am.”

When it came to conversations about marriage, the fun-loving couple relied on their realistic and rational sides: both Kata and Alisha struggled with how a “heteronormative paradigm” such as marriage could be reconciled with their queer identities, so they had to unpack what marriage and a wedding would mean for them.

Kata explains, “We grew up in a culture where marriage was not an option. It was hard to wrap our head around what that looked like for us individually and together. Minnesota legalized marriage at the same time the benefits of marriage became tangible for us.” Through careful consideration, the couple decided to go forward with a wedding, but their wedding definitely occurred on their own terms, with a balance of tradition and their own unique aesthetic.

When planning their wedding, the couple had a few key elements in mind: Alisha wanted an evening wedding in a flower garden, and Kata wanted a dance floor and a large space to accommodate their guests. But they knew they had to be flexible and practical with their vision, especially for a fall wedding when weather is unpredictable.

The duo easily decided on the Historic Washington County Courthouse in Stillwater, which offered a beautiful view of the river and the opportunity to incorporate their vision. Whimsical, yet practical, the location lent itself well to an outdoor ceremony and an indoor reception. The classic beauty of the venue needed very little additional decoration, and a Sunday event was affordable and flexible. The couple chose to marry on Oct. 11, 2015, five years after their first date.

When it came to expressing their aesthetic and identity as a couple, the pair saw the power (and fun) of claiming a classic aesthetic to express their queer identity. Alisha and Kata expressed the importance of ensuring that everyone felt comfortable and welcome: “Staying traditional was the basis that everyone could relate to, but we wanted all our people (wedding party or guest) to feel entirely themselves. Being artistic and appreciative

of performance, we love the production of dressing up.” By queering a classic aesthetic, the couple thoroughly “embraced the fancy!”

Following Alisha’s desire for a nighttime garden wedding, every tiny detail evoked a 1920s jazz-inspired midnight garden (with a bit of “shiny, sparkly stardust” thrown in for good measure). With the help from the florist and the flowers available at the farmer’s market, the couple was able to develop a color palate that reflected their ideal aesthetic. The color scheme incorporated rich jewel tones with flashes of gold, balanced by more neutral, earthy hues.

The bridal party looked fabulous in vintage-inspired formalwear. Bridesmaids donned individually selected Adrianna Papell dresses in a variety of neutral colors (with sparkle and pizzazz, of course), and the “bro-maids” wore black velvet jackets and charcoal gray pants. Alisha looked stunning in a simple, elegant bridal gown that lent itself well to dancing, and Kata’s wine-colored velvet jacket added a splash of color that matched her joyful personality.

Prior to their ceremony, Hennepin County Judge Carolina Lamas (whom Alisha clerks for) legally married the couple. But the duo had an even more familiar face officiate their wedding: Kata’s father. As a Methodist minister, Kata’s father officiated the weddings of her other siblings, and it was important for this tradition to continue for this celebration.

The October ceremony was magical, but one surprise sticks out: the abundance of ladybugs. The day was unseasonably warm, and there were ladybugs everywhere. Kata recalls, “We attribute this blessing to Alisha’s great grandmother, as it was her birthday that day!”

As expected, the couple threw an amazing reception with dancing and decadent food. The couple needed to accommodate several dietary restrictions for themselves and their guests, so they chose to cater through Brasa Premium Rotisserie, a delicious and queer-friendly choice. Alisha adds, “We love to feed our people! We wanted to find a vendor who could allow us to break bread with everyone.”

Bite-sized desserts were custom made by pastry chef Taylor Kollitz and played into the garden theme with fall-inspired colors and flavors. Guests nibbled on dark chocolate mini muffins with plum frosting, mini mango tarts, and decadent cranberry and chocolate macaroons. The little treats were also conscious of dietary restrictions, so everyone got to savor the sweetness.

At the heart of all the festivities was the most important element: the couple’s friends and family. Their crew set up the venue and tended bar; friends pitched in for ceremony music and flower arrangements. The couple acknowledges that the wedding would not have happened without the assistance: “The sheer bliss that followed was a result of their outpouring of love. Our wedding was produced by the community we call family. Our marriage is dependent on their love and support. We count ourselves beyond lucky!”

And lucky they are, for Kata and Alisha have each found someone to balance their unique gifts and celebrate their individual spirit. Side by side, they will continue to add sparkle to each other’s lives for many years to come. ■



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Celebrating

{ WEDDING STORY }

JASON & CHRISTOPHER

Surrounded by Love



BY SHANE LUECK | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELITE PHOTOGRAPHY

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That was the case for Jason Schuck and Christopher Wasilensky when they met at a friend's birthday happy hour in 2005. Christopher touched Jason's leg before saying, simply, "nice pants." As Jason says, "it was all downhill from there."

"I wasn't expecting to meet anybody other than new friends," he continues. "We're both very social people in hindsight, you meet all these people and don't think about it, but there's this guy and we just sort of clicked. In the following days we just kept talking and seeing each other. We were both dating other people at the time and a couple weeks later we just decided to not see other people and date each other."

Ten years later, July 8 of 2015, Christopher planned something special for their 10th anniversary of meeting. He had Jason meet him where they met, but unbeknownst to Jason, many of their friends would be there waiting. "I kept thinking, should I do it? Maybe I shouldn't do it. But in the end I decided to just go for it," Christopher recalls, referencing his nerves right before he proposed. "He's just one of the nicest, kindest people I've met; he has a really big heart. He's like my biggest fan, always there for me."

At the time, the pair were planning a 10-year anniversary trip to Chicago for a few days later. "I was planning on proposing in Chicago," Jason laughs. "And about 20 of our friends were going to be there, but then he had already proposed. So we had about a day and half in Chicago before our friends showed up and then

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38 ➔





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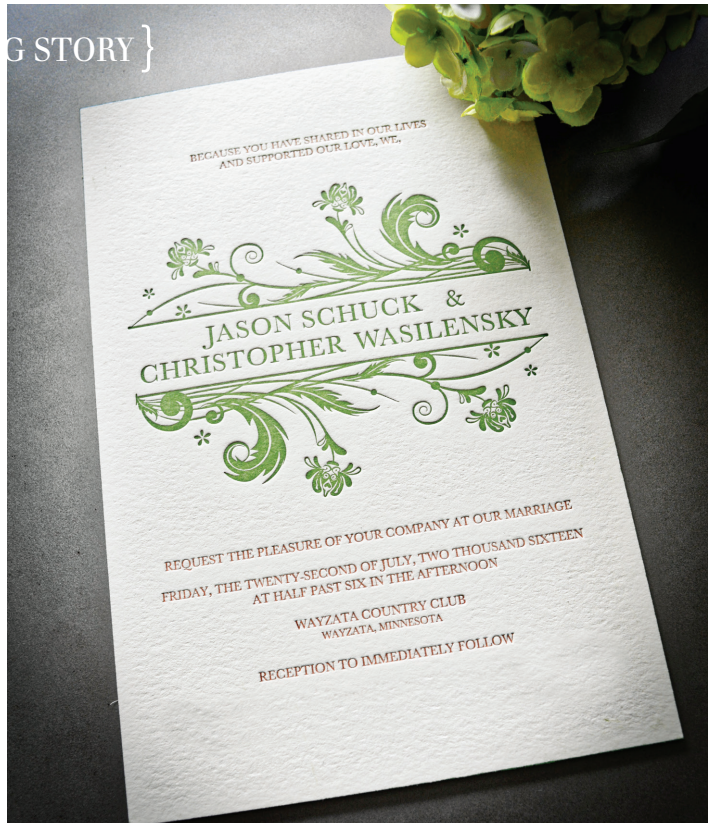


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it essentially just became an engagement party.”

Deciding on vendors for the wedding was quite simple for the couple, who already knew plenty of friends in various industries. Notably, although Jason currently works in funeral services, he used to be part-time with a florist and was still in contact, making Bloomberry Floral a natural choice.

According to Jason, the only hiccup in the planning process was deciding on the color of flowers. “The florist had known both of us for quite some time and sort of just winged it and brought [Christopher’s] style and my style together,” he says. “Christopher wanted something that was very white, I wanted something that was bright and cheery and a lot more vibrant color, so they blended the two together.”

Going through Country Cake Cupboard for the evening’s cake was also because of a friendship, as was the decision to use the Wayzata Country Club as a venue. Jason was working a funeral one day when the florist stopped by with a delivery and told him to call Kathryn at the country club because she was interested in hosting the nuptials.

“We weren’t members,” Jason says, “but I called Kathryn and she said ‘Oh no, we’d love to have you guys at the club.’ And after talking about the financial components and all those sorts of things, they were actually cheaper than any place we had looked at. And she was so welcoming and so open to us and I’d known her for a long time, so it just worked that everything clicked to be there at the club with a lot of people we already knew.”

The same kind of serendipity and loving attention to detail occurred when the couple was shopping for rings as well. Sara at Commers Custom Jewelers came highly recommended from two other couples that they had known. “The North Loop has a date night once a month,” Jason recalls. “We went out on date night and had stopped and she was just absolutely wonderful and easy to work with and it was another one of those perfect fits.”

“And then the photographer [from Elite Photography] actually photo-

graphed this really good friend of our’s wedding two years prior and we just fell in love with her at that wedding,” Christopher adds. “That was a no brainer. We called her and didn’t go anywhere else, we knew we were going to use her.”

The involvement of friends and loved ones continued right into the attire for the evening. Bo Anderson at Tom James Company had worked with both of them creating clothing for their profession (Christopher works in realty). “It was great; he came to our house and he brought all sorts of fabric swatches with him,” Christopher says. “We looked and compared and contrasted and decided from there what we really wanted.”

Deciding on navy rather than black, Jason adds that they wanted something a bit more formal, ultimately deciding on matching bespoke suits with unique shirts, ties, and vests. The coherent look allowed each man to showcase his own personality in front of the 172 guests at the wedding.

Jason and Christopher were surrounded by love on the big day as Shawn, “a very dear friend of ours who we’ve known for a very long time” officiated the ceremony. “We knew that we wanted him to do that,” Jason says. “He knows our personalities very well and what we were both looking for. We only talked to him for maybe about an hour about what we were basically looking for and he wrote everything himself and really personalized everything to us and our relationship to him and the rest of our extended friends.”

Rather than going the traditional route of having parents walk them down the aisle, Jason and Christopher had their nieces give them away, while second cousins acted as flower girls and ring bearers. Their mothers showed their love and support by signing the marriage license.

Jason remembers, “We didn’t have a wedding party, only because it’s very hard to choose amongst your friends who’s in and who’s out, so to speak, so it was just the two of us with our officiant and all of our guests, surrounded by love.” ■

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Photo: lauren b. photography



TOM FLICKER & DEAN KETERI

Photographer: Lumen Photography
Wedding Date: September 5, 2015
Dating Since: January 2002
Location of Ceremony & Reception:
Greysolon Ballroom, Duluth
Wedding Coordinator: Tom
Flowers: Saffron & Grey
Cake: How Sweet It Is, Duluth





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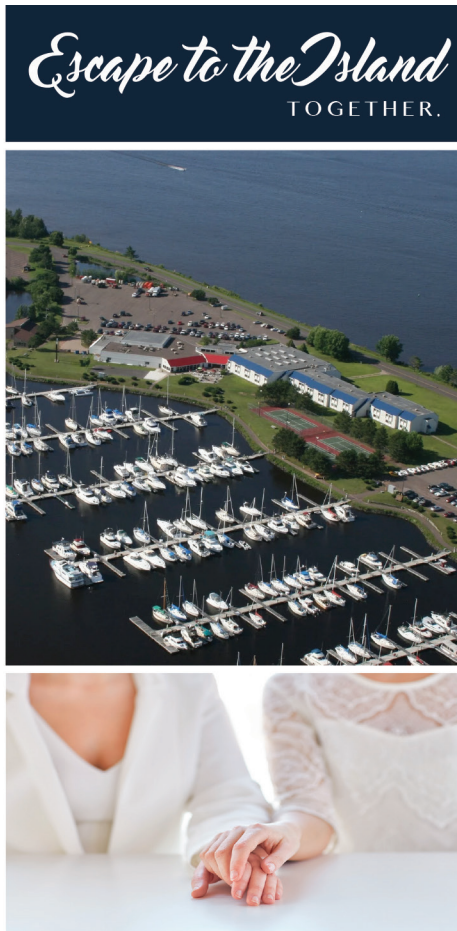
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KENDRA CURRY & JANINE VESPER

Photographer:

Ashley Berry, Ashley Berry Photography

Wedding Date: September 26, 2015

Dating Since: September 1998

Location of Ceremony & Reception:

Woodland Hill Winery

Wedding Coordinator:

Kellie Kubuoy, Rustic Elegance Weddings

Flowers:

Frank Bohlander and Mark Hall, Best Wishes Floral

Cake: Distinctive Catering and Events

Invitations: Invitations by Dawn

Hair: Richard Staab, Salon Rouge

Makeup: Jeffrey Dunn, Salon Rouge



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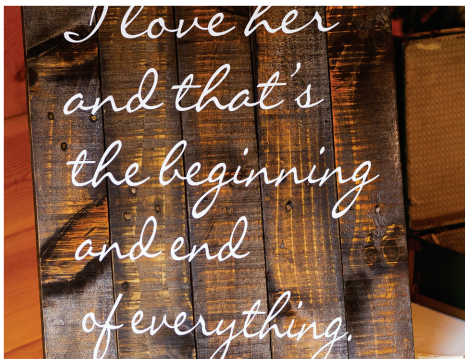
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KACI & LANE O'CONNELL

Photographer: Tim Larson
Wedding Date: April 23, 2016
Dating Since: January 2013
Location of Ceremony & Reception:
 Pine Peaks Event Center, Crosslake
Flowers: Bloom Designs
Cake: Simply Delicious MN
Invitations: Minted + Jenn & Kate Koehler





BRIANA & JEANINE WROGE

Photographer: Michelle Tanner Photography
Wedding Date: May 14, 2016
Dating Since: November 14, 2010
Location of Ceremony:
 Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Apple Valley
Location of Reception:
 Southview Country Club, St. Paul
Wedding Coordinator: Kristin Drakulic
Flowers: Festivities
Cake: Debbie Prasser
Attire: JenMar Creations
Hair: Sarah Dill
Makeup: Jana Antony, Mary Kay





DARRYL DROZDIK & KYLE WILLIAMS

Photographer: DnK Photography

Wedding Date: July 9, 2016

Dating Since: March 2004

Location of Ceremony & Reception: Aster Cafe

Wedding Coordinator: Kareem Murphy

Flowers: Artemisia Studios

Cake: Buttercream Cakes

Hair: Men's Spa and Accolades Salon Spa



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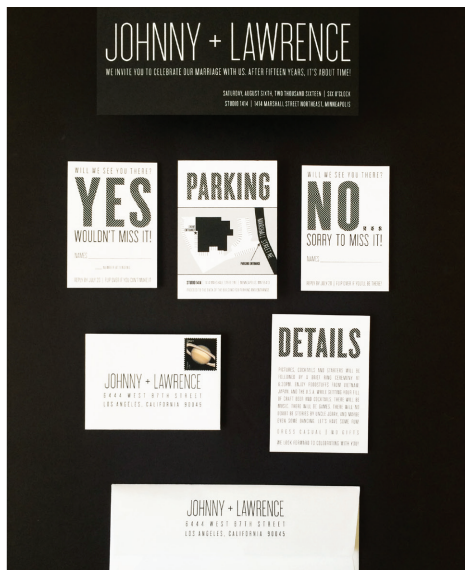
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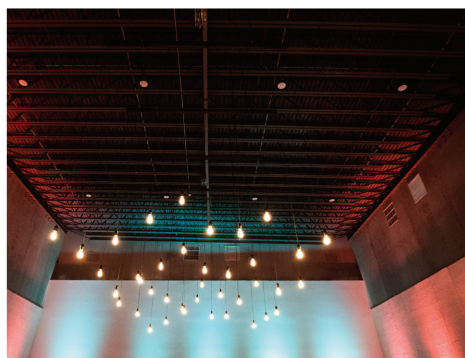


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JOHNNY DAU & LAWRENCE MORTENSON

Photographer: Melissa Hesse, Rivets and Roses
Wedding Date: August 6, 2016
Dating Since: 2001
Location of Ceremony & Reception: Studio 1414
Wedding Coordinator: Style-Architects Weddings + Events
Flowers: Munster Rose
Invitations: Spark Letterpress
Food: Fabulous Catering



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Michelle Tanner



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BOBBI JO KRIEG & SHARON ABEL

Photographer: Charnell Timms Photography

Wedding Date: August 13, 2016

Dating Since: September 2012

Location of Ceremony & Reception:

Columbia Manor, Minneapolis

Wedding Coordinator: Dana of Keyed Up Events

Flowers: Whole Foods Floral

Cake: Dairy Queen

Hair: Rae of Vizi Salon



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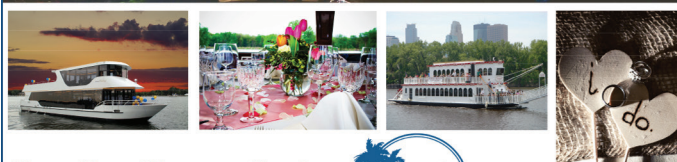
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AMANDA "LOTHY" & ANNA LOTH-GRESSER



Photographer: Amy Smith, Amy Mae Photography
Wedding Date: August 14, 2016
Dating Since: May 18, 2014, friends since 2009
Location of Ceremony & Reception: 514 Studios
Wedding Coordinator: Maven at 514 Studios
Flowers: Marilyn Gresser (Anna's mom)
Cake: Donuts by Granny Donuts
Food: Black Sea Restaurant
Makeup: Andrea Reis



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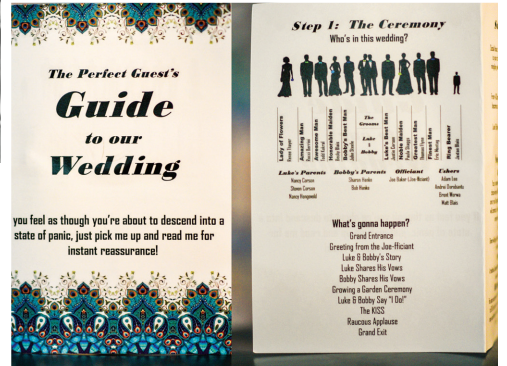
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LUKE CORSON & ROBERT HENKE

Photographer: Charnell Timms Photography
Wedding Date: August 27, 2016
Dating Since: August 27, 2012
Location of Ceremony & Reception: St. James Hotel, Red Wing, MN
Wedding Coordinator: Marissa Ostern, St. James Hotel
Flowers: Flowers purchased from Preston Floral and Gift, arrangements by Luke
Cake: Farmington Bakery
Invitations: Luke



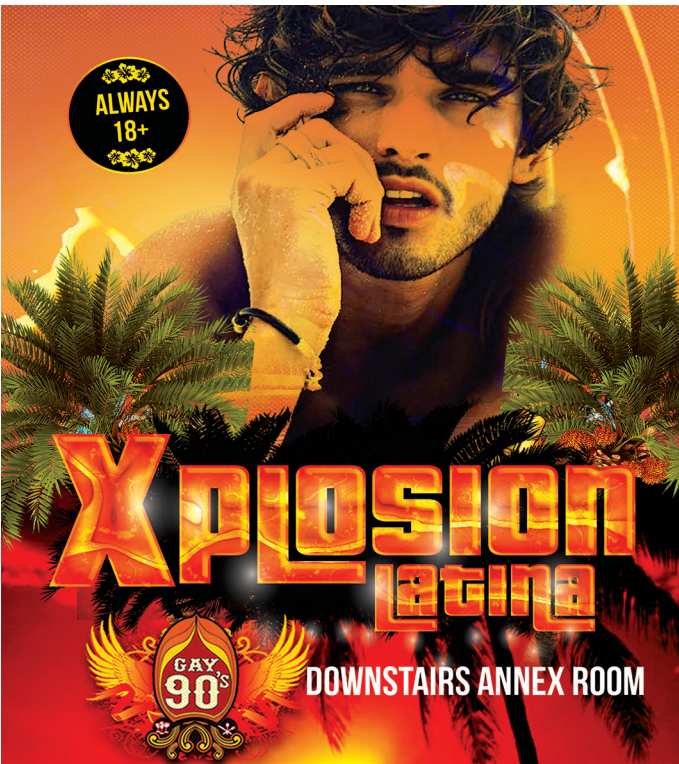


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ALEX JOST & GLO BEATTIE

Photographer: Josh Manley Photography

Wedding Date: August 27, 2016

Dating Since: November 16, 2009

Location of Ceremony & Reception:

Larson's Barn, McGregor

Wedding Coordinator: Jess Wallace

Flowers: Jennifer Hauck and Duluth Flower Farm

Cake: Lyndsay Smitke at SnazzyCakes

Hair: Tammy Moll and Molly Klassen



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JESSICA & LISA BERGERSON

Photographer: Booray Perry

Wedding Date: September 2, 2016

Dating Since: July 20, 2015

Location of Ceremony:

Anglers Cove, Redington Beach, FL

Location of Reception: Island Way, FL

Wedding Coordinator: Bobbi with Perfect Florida
Beach Weddings

Flowers: Jessica & Lisa

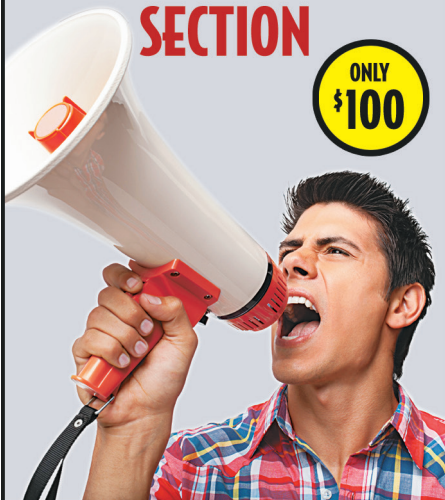
Cake: Publix

Hair: Kelli at Creative Touches



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JAKE PEGGAR & SWAPNIL MANE

Photographer:
Carla Crandall, Creative Image Photography
Wedding Date: September 4, 2016
Dating Since: July 2013
Location of Ceremony & Reception:
Warehouse Winery
Flowers: Minneapolis Farmer's Market
Invitations: Elegant Wedding Invites



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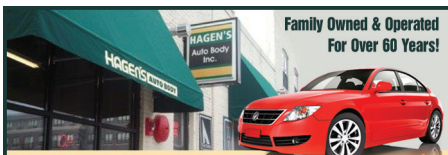
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Loving and 'Loving' in Splendor

"Love is a many-splendored thing," runs the song lyrics, and often more splended than people care to embrace. In fact, over decades, marriages between certain consenting adults have been banned, despite the song's declaration that "love is nature's way of giving a reason to be living."

Today's *Lavender* readers are more likely to be thinking of the 2013 decisions that gave same-sex partners the right to marry, bestowing obligations as well on those partners who now pluck that "April rose that only grows in the early spring."

That last line is somewhat more specific than the "many-splendored," touted in the rest of the song, since today there are late bloomers as well, bloomers and loves once forbidden to bloom at all. Not too long ago, not only were those joys assumed to be to *one man* and *one woman*, but more specifically, one *white* man and one *white* woman.

A year short of a half-century ago, June 12, 1967, the Supreme Court unanimously struck down Virginia's law prohibiting interracial marriages as a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. The story of the appel-

lants, Richard and Mildred Loving, of Caroline County, has been widely told, but now one of the bright spots of November will be the release of *Loving*, a British-American film starring Australian Joel Edgerton as Richard and Ethiopian-Irish Ruth Negga as Mildred.

Speaking on the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in 2007 she stated, "I believe all Americans, no matter their race, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry... I am still not a political person, but I am proud that Richard's and my name is on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness, and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, gay or straight, seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all. That's what *Loving*, and loving, are all about."

At her death in 2008, Mildred Loving was survived by two of her three children, eight grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren. She didn't live to see the 2013 decisions, but she would applaud the many-splendored branches of that April rose now attainable by thousands more of her countrymen. ■

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